

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION SPECIAL STUDY SESSION MINUTES



MEDFORD
OREGON

March 29, 2022

5:30 P.M.

Santo Community Center, Room 5

Parks Commission Special Study Session- Disc Golf Course Feasibility Study

Haley Cox of City Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department provided background of Disc Golf Course Feasibility Study. The City has contracted Terrain Landscape Architecture and Disc Ventures to complete the study, including possible site layouts and cost estimates. Six possible sites were initially identified for review, and site visits were conducted on February 23rd and 24th, 2022.

Piper von Chamier of Terrain Landscape Architecture provided overview of existing disc golf courses in the region and potential sites for City of Medford.

1. Bear Creek Park (west side) was previously identified as the preferred location. Site constraints include adjacency to I-5, bridge crossing of Crooked Creek, improvement of parking and restroom facilities, possible street development. Comments:
 - Disc golf users had previously installed an 18-hole course in this location ca. 2008, after removal of course at Holmes Park, which the City also removed and never replaced.
 - Crooked Creek crossing and I-5 adjacency are not ideal.
 - Potential for 9-hole "temporary" installation south of creek while design and permitting for permanent course is ongoing.
2. Chrissy Park has a disc golf course identified in the existing master plan. Site constraints include lack of access, rough terrain, and required facility and public improvements. Comments:
 - Ravine crossing would be necessary to access site identified in master plan for course.
 - Installation of water towers may be required in advance of site development.
 - Potential for "temporary" course closer to the road with minimal facilities (portable toilets and gravel parking)
 - Erosion could be a problem for course sustainability.
3. Donahue Frohnmayer Park could support a small 9-hole course. Site constraints include potential conflict with existing park amenities and possible public improvements. Comments:
 - Significant apprehension about limited capacity to serve user groups, creating negative impressions.
 - Small course would be great for a second installation that is targeted to beginners.
 - Potential for handicap accessibility would also be great.
4. Prescott Park is large enough to support dynamic 18-hole course. Site constraints include poison oak, ticks, limited parking and restroom facilities, potential conflict with user groups. Comments:
 - Extensive use near existing parking area could create user conflicts.
 - Recommendation to relocate potential course to east side near equestrian loop trail.

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- Additional parking and restroom facilities could be provided near quarry entrance.
 - Significant management considerations with poison oak and other wildlife habitat.
5. Howard Memorial Sports Park was not recommended for course installation. Site constraints include busy adjacent streets and lack of topographic features and shade.
6. Midway Park was not initially recommended for course installation due to planning efforts for installation of progressive bike skills park in this location. Comments:
- Disc golf users highly favored this location due to its dynamic topography and abundant shade.
 - Existing parking and restroom facilities available at adjacent Railroad Park.
 - Plenty of room for 18-hole course on west side of Bear Creek or 9-holes on each side using existing bridge.
 - Development at this location would displace current illegal camping and associated negative perceptions.
 - Fire risk may be reduced due to regular vegetation management and recreational use.

Other general comments by the public:

- There are three active disc golf groups in the Rogue Valley, which have positive relationships with private land owners and public land managers in neighboring cities and counties.
- In Josephine County, the premier Tom Pierce Disc Golf Course is managed by a consortium of user group reps and a dedicated liaison from the County Parks Department.
- Disc golf groups have experience running events to raise funding for course maintenance and other charitable community causes.
- Jackson County is the only county along the I-5 corridor in Oregon and Northern California that does not have a public disc golf course.
- After the City's removal of the Holmes Park course, several efforts have been initiated in the past to install a course in Medford with disheartening lack of follow-through.
- Within the first two weeks of the privately-owned Bear Creek Disc Golf Course opening, there were roughly equal users for traditional golf as disc golf, demonstrating high demand.
- Disc golf is a sport that builds community and breaks barriers between different social/economic populations.

Comments by Parks Commissioners present:

- Dan Ratty asked whether the user groups were prepared to provide "sweat equity" into the development and ongoing maintenance of the courses. Users present indicated that they have offered many times in the past to design and install a course at no cost to the City, and while they don't have that capacity currently, they are more than willing to be active partners in the ongoing management of a course, once installed.

Parks and Recreation Commission Agenda

- Jaime Stephens supported inclusion of a disc golf course in the Midway Park Master Plan. She had concerns about removal of poison oak and other wildlife habitat at Prescott Park.
- Marie Cabler recalled some of the previous activity surrounding disc golf in Medford and supported development of a course at Midway Park.
- Elizabeth Leydsman lives on Berrydale Avenue close to Midway Park and would be glad to take her children there to learn disc golf.
- Ryan Lundgaard supported inclusion of disc golf in the Midway Park Master Plan, if feasible.